

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 AID-05 DHA-02 ORM-01 AF-06 IO-10 /085 W

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R 201828Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4404

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 27251

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO, SP, FR

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH VICE PRESIDENT OF PORTUGUESE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REF: PARIS 27112

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: VICE PRESIDENT PORTUGUESE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY TELLS US THAT, IN SPITE OF CURRENT PROBLEMS,
PORTUGAL IS LIKELY TO SOLVE REMAINING PROBLEMS. ONE OF
MOST DIFFICULT ISSUES WILL BE RESETTLEMENT OF SKILLED
ANGOLAN REFUGEES. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFFS HAD OPPORTUNITY OCTOBER 20 TO MEET VICE
PRESIDENT PORTUGUESE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COSTA FERNANDEZ
AT LUNCH WITH PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR COIMBRA MARTINS.
THROUGHOUT DISCUSSION FERNANDEZ, WHO IS EVIDENTLY TRUSTED
SOCIALIST AND FRIEND OF COIMBRA MARTINS, TOOK CONSIST-
ENTLY OPTIMISTIC LINE, ARGUING THAT PORTUGAL HAD OVER-
COME WORST OF CRISIS; AND THAT IF, AS HE EXPECTED,
GOVERNMENT COULD MAINTAIN ITSELF ANOTHER FEW MONTHS,
SITUATION COULD WELL BECOME ALMOST STABLE. HE DISMISSED
CURRENT NEWS REPORTS ABOUT IMMINENT COUP, SUGGESTING THAT
NEITHER LEFT WING NOR RIGHT WING COUP ATTEMPTS LIKELY TO
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SUCCEED.

3. IN RESPONSE MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FERNANDEZ SEEMED LESS CRITICAL OF GENERAL FABIAO'S ACTIONS AT OPORTO THAN PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN (REFTEL), ARGUING THAT THERE WERE NOW CENTERS OF NEW DISCIPLINE IN ARMED FORCES AND THAT FABIAO WAS PERHAPS TRYING TO CALM A SPECIFICALLY LOCAL PROBLEM. HE SEEMED HOPEFUL IN FACT THAT ACTIONS FLOWING FROM MOST RECENT SESSIONS REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL WOULD IN TIME SUCCEED IN RESTORING ORDER TO ARMED FORCES AND RECAPTURING CONTROL OVER MEDIA.

4. FERNANDEZ WAS CLEARLY LESS POSITIVE ABOUT PORTUGAL'S CAPACITY TO ABSORB THE MANY SKILLED ANGOLAN REFUGEES WHO WERE FINDING IT HARD TO FIND JOBS AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY DIFFICULT TO ADAPT TO CONFINING PORTUGUESE ENVIRONMENT. HE HOPED THAT AS MANY AS POSSIBLE COULD GO TO BRAZIL. PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR INTERJECTED THAT THERE WAS ALSO POSSIBILITY OF RESETTLING SOME IN FRANCE. BOTH AGREED U.S. AID WOULD CONTINUE TO BE INDISPENSABLE AND WAS MUCH APPRECIATED.

5. FERNANDEZ HAD WARMEST PRAISE FOR AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI (WITH WHOM HE MET FEW DAYS AGO) AND EMBASSY STAFF LISBON, WHO IN HIS WORDS WERE DOING "EXTRAORDINARY JOB AND KNEW PORTUGAL AS WELL, IF NOT BETTER THAN MOST PORTUGUESE POLITICIANS."

6. COMMENT: WE ARE, OF COURSE, NOT IN POSITION TO EVALUATE VICE PRESIDENT FERNANDEZ'S VIEWS BUT OFFER THEM FOR WHATEVER INTEREST THEY MAY HAVE TO EMBASSY LISBON AND DEPARTMENT.
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